



ANDREAS BORGEAS
COUNCILMEMBER

Fresno Establishes Sister City Relationship With The City of Etchmiadzin, Armenia

Fresno, CA (October 30, 2009)--Fresno welcomed its newest sister city at a press conference held today at Fresno City Hall. Mayor Ashley Swearengin joined the Fresno Armenia Sister City Committee members and numerous local and national Armenian organizations and churches to announce the newly created Fresno-Etchmiadzin sister city relationship.

Councilmember Andreas Borgeas, who founded and chaired the Fresno-Armenia Sister City Committee and spearheaded this effort, stated, "Today is a great day of pride as we celebrate our City's Armenian culture and identity by establishing this long-anticipated sister city relationship with the City of Etchmiadzin." He further stated, "Due to the efforts of our committee members, Fresno and Etchmiadzin will enjoy a host of new business, trade, travel, cultural arts and educational opportunities."

Mayor Ashley Swearengin stated, "I am proud of the efforts of the Fresno-Armenia Sister City Committee and I am excited to welcome the City of Etchmiadzin to our sister city family."

Consul General Grigor Hovhannissian of the Republic of Armenia said, "Congratulations to all of us on this special occasion. This new sister city relationship is very important for Armenians taking into consideration the unique historical and cultural features of the City of Etchmiadzin and the fact that Fresno is home to the oldest Armenian-American community with a rich spiritual and cultural heritage."

Barlow Der Mugerdechian, coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno and a Sister City Committee member said, "The establishment of a sister city relationship between the City of Fresno and the City of Etchmiadzin, Armenia, will be an opportunity for the citizens of both cities to become better acquainted with each other and to work together to achieve some common goals."

The Fresno-Armenian Sister City Committee has met regularly over the past year to establish a sister city with Armenia. The selection of the City of Etchmiadzin came after much thought and discussion, "The Fresno-Etchmiadzin relationship fits the needs of each city well; both cities present mutually beneficial opportunities in agriculture, education, and business exchanges," stated Vahagn Bznouni, incoming Chair of the Fresno-Armenia Sister City Committee. A formal ceremony occurred in the City of Etchmiadzin and was officiated by Etchmiadzin's Mayor Karen Grigoryan and attended by Arman Kirakossian, Armenia's Deputy Foreign Minister.

It is anticipated that Fresno will send a delegation to the City of Etchmiadzin in the spring of 2010.

For membership or other Fresno Armenia Sister City Committee inquiries please contact fresnoarmeniasistercity@yahoo.com.

For additional press information contact:

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Fresno-Armenia Sister City Committee Members

Chair, Andreas Borgeas
Vice-Chair, Vahagn Bznouni

Members

Anna Borgeas
Allan Jendian
Barlow Der Mugrdechian
Charles Garabedian
Hygo Ohanessian
Mary Alice Kaloostian
Nishan Derkalousdian
Philip Tavlian
Sevag Tateosian
Yeghig Keshishian

Supporters and Organizations

Pauline Basmajian, ADL (Ramgavar)
Zaroohi der Mugrdichian, AGBU/ St. Paul
Yeghig Keshishian, Armenian Assembly
Maral Kismetian, Daughters of Vartan,
Raffi Karayan, Knights of Vartan
Migran Kutnerian, Tekeyan Cultural Assn.
Fr. Yeghia Hairabedian, St. Gregory
Frank Korkmazian Jr., St. Gregory
Fr. Vartan Kasparian, St. Mary Yettem
Myron Sheklian, St. Mary
Fr. Arshen Aivazian, St Paul
Zaroohi Der Mugrdichian, St. Paul
Jerry Surabian, Sts. Sahag-Mesrob
Jano Karkazian, Homenetmen
Legvon Eskigian, Hamazkayeen
Bedros Khderian, A.R.F.
Der Hayr Vahan Gosdanian, Holy Trinity Armenian
Apostolic Church
Varoujan Der Simonian, Armenian Technology Group
Mary Ekmalian, Armenian American Citizens' League
Chuck Jamgotchian, Triple X, Selma
Bob Bedoian, Triple X, Fresno
Rosie Bedrosian, ARS
Rich Sanikian, ANC

The City of Etchmiadzin, Armenia

Etchmiadzin is a city in the Armavir Province of Armenia. Etchmiadzin is the most populous city of the province and is located about 20km west of Yerevan, Armenia's largest city and capitol. The population of the City Etchmiadzin is approximately 61,000 people.

Nearby Etchmiadzin is the Holy See of the Holy Armenian Apostolic Church. Etchmiadzin is a world renowned travel destination, is a leading producer of agricultural products and has deep and rich history.



The Etchmiadzin Cathedral

